DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 225 328 EC 150 679

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TITLE Guidelines to Writing or Rewriting Materials for Deaf Students with Special Emphasis on Syntax.
INSTITUTION Gallaudet Coll., Washington, D.C. Pre-College Programs.
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 36p.
AVAILABLE FROM OUTREACH, Pre-College Programs, Box 114, Gallaudet College, Washington, DC 20002 (#PM-0217, $3.75).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Deafness; Elementary Secondary Education; Idioms; *Instructional Materials; *Material Development; *Readability; Readability Formulas; Syntax; Vocabulary; *Writing (Composition)

ABSTRACT

The manual is intended to help writers or adapters of instructional materials for deaf students. The first section examines difficulties in providing suitable reading material for deaf students. The problems in evaluating deaf students' reading levels are examined. Writers are cautioned to pay particular attention to syntax, vocabulary, and idioms. The decision of rewriting material or writing entirely new material is considered. A four-part guideline for adapting reading material is offered. Three appendixes make up the bulk of the document. Appendix A describes 10 areas of syntactical construction (such as question, negation, conjunction, and pronouns), and suggests a sequential order of difficulty in learning parts of each construction. Appendix B presents the same information arranged by level of difficulty. The final appendix provides an example of rewriting a paragraph at different syntactic levels. (CL)

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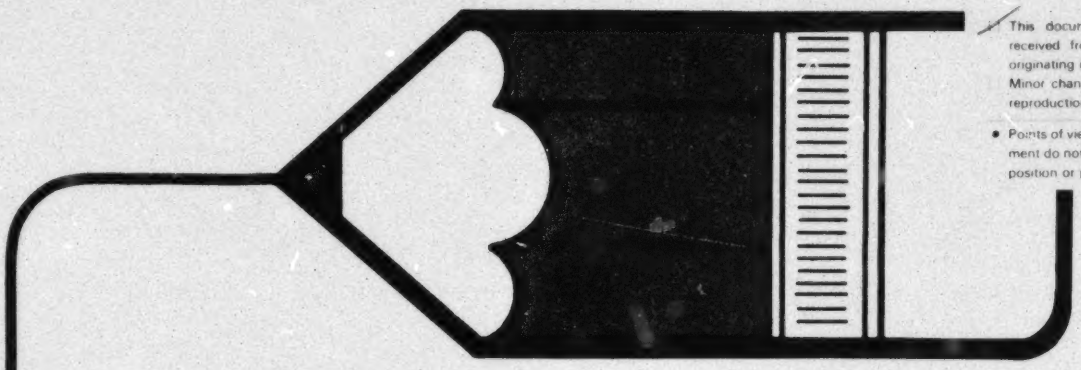

GUIDELINES to WRITING or REWRITING MATERIALS for DEAF STUDENTS

With Special Emphasis on Syntax

Pre-College Programs
Gallaudet College

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With Special Emphasis on Syntax

BETTY ROSENBLOOM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank the many individuals who assisted in this project. Special appreciation goes to James Kearney, who offered valuable assistance preparing this document for publication.

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This publication was sponsored by the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, which is authorized and funded by the U.S. Department of Education through Public Law 89-694. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this manual is to assist teachers, writers of instructional materials, and other educators in the task of writing or rewriting materials to be read by deaf students. It should also help educators judge the relative difficulty of textbooks and other printed materials before buying or using them with students.

The manual begins with a general overview of the task of providing materials which are within the range of deaf students' reading abilities. Then it offers some general comments and advice on the problems deaf students have with syntax, vocabulary, and idioms. Next, the question of whether to write original text or to rewrite existing text is discussed. The main section of the manual concludes with a summary list of suggested procedures for writing or rewriting materials.

Users of this manual will undoubtedly be referring to the three appendices more often than to the main body of the manual. Appendices A and B contain detailed information about those aspects of syntax which are difficult for deaf students. Appendix A describes ten areas of syntactical construction (questions, negation, etc.) and suggests the level of difficulty of each specific construction. Appendix B presents the same information arranged by level of difficulty. There are four suggested levels of difficulty and more than 30 constructions are listed.

Appendix C is a sample of the analysis and rewriting of a short passage.

Users of the manual are urged to study the entire manual before attempting to apply any part of it. There are no simple answers in this area of education of the deaf, and it would be a mistake to treat the manual as if it were a kind of cookbook with explicit recipes for action. There is as much art as there is science in writing for deaf students.

A major concern in preparation of the manual was not to overwhelm the reader with technical grammatical terms. It is hoped that it will be used by teachers in all subject matter areas and not by English teachers alone. Yet, some knowledge of terminology had to be presumed; if it had not, then the manual would have grown into a textbook on English grammar.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Students' Reading Ability Level 1

Reading Level of Material 2

Syntax 2

Vocabulary 3

Idioms 4

Rewriting vs. Writing 5

A Suggested Procedure 6

Appendix A: Probable Levels of Difficulty

of Syntactic Structures 7

Questions 8

Conjunction 10

Negation 11

Pronouns 12

Reflexives 14

Passives 15

Relative Clauses 16

Complements 17

Adverbials 19

Appendix B: Suggested Structures for Four Levels

of Reading Difficulty 20

Level 1 20

Level 2 20

Level 3 21

Level 4 22

Appendix C: An Example of Rewriting a Paragraph

at Different Syntactic Levels 23

Level 4 to Level 3 24

Level 3 to Level 2 25

Level 2 to Level 1 26

References 27

Introduction

Providing suitable reading material for their students is a major problem for educators of the deaf. In general, commercially available textbooks are of little or no use to deaf students. Regardless of the subject, the reading matter in these books is usually too difficult and is a barrier between the student and the subject itself. It is necessary, therefore, either to write original material for the students or to simplify the language in existing texts.

Material for deaf students can be written on several levels of difficulty appropriate to the reading ability of the students for whom it is intended. Sometimes writers assume that everything must be reduced to short, simple sentences and simple vocabulary. This is not always necessary, nor is it always advisable. Very simple sentences convey a limited amount of information and are fairly certain to bore high level readers. Material for them may be written in more sophisticated language, with complex sentences and more difficult vocabulary. This has the added advantage of giving the better readers an opportunity to strengthen their reading skills.

The logical way to go about writing for any students is to find their level of reading ability and to write material at that level. When the students in question are deaf, however, the difficulty of the task is much greater.

Students' Reading Ability Level

It is very difficult to determine the reading ability of deaf students. Standardized reading tests have been poor indicators.

For years, classroom teachers have found discrepancies between their students' reading grade equivalent scores, and the ability of their students to read material on indicated grade levels. The accuracy of these classroom observations is borne out by at least two research studies.

Moores (1967), using the cloze procedure, tested reading comprehension of hearing and deaf students who had been matched by reading scores on the Stanford Achievement Tests. The deaf subjects scored below their hearing counterparts on the cloze test, and Moores concluded that the Stanford scores were inflated for the deaf subjects.

O'Neill (1973) developed a test of knowledge of correctness of grammaticality which she administered to a group of deaf students having a mean grade equivalent of 3.3 on the Stanford Paragraph Meaning subtests. She then gave the same test to a group of hearing students having a mean grade equivalent of 2.6 on the same subtest. The hearing subjects' performance was far superior to the deaf subjects', even though 32 percent of the deaf subjects had reading scores above those of the hearing subjects. The O'Neill data seems to support Moores'

conclusion that reading grade equivalent scores provide an inflated measure for deaf students.

The Test of Syntactic Abilities (TSA) developed at the Institute for Child Behavior at the University of Illinois can be used to provide a great deal of information about the ability of an individual deaf student to comprehend a number of syntactic structures. This information should be invaluable to teachers as they prepare material for their students to read. (It should be noted here that the TSA does not attempt to relate its results to grade level.)

Reading Level of Material

Deciding upon the reading level of printed material poses at least three problems. A great many readability formulas are available, but none of them is really adequate when applied to materials to be used with deaf students.

Deaf students have very special problems with syntax. They lag far behind their hearing peers in the acquisition of the syntactic structures of English. Teen-aged deaf students often cannot understand structures which are easily understood by much younger hearing children. Most readability measures depend upon sentence length to determine the complexity of the syntax of the sentence. Sentence length is not a sensitive enough indicator of complexity if the sentences are to be read by deaf students. A very short sentence may contain several difficult structures, making it almost incomprehensible to students who do not know these structures.

Deaf students also have a great deal of trouble with vocabulary and idiomatic usage. Although most readability formulas contain some measure of vocabulary difficulty, they do not take idioms into account.

Syntax, vocabulary, and idioms are three problem areas to be considered when preparing material for deaf students.

Syntax

If deaf students are asked to read sentences containing structures they cannot understand, they may (1) simply become confused and get no meaning from the sentence, or (2) find a meaning that was other than the writer's intent. Consider the sentence, "The boy with my sister has red hair." When asked who has red hair, the deaf student will often answer, "my sister," an answer which makes sense only if one reads the last five words of the sentence. Deaf students apparently impose a surface Subject-Verb-Object order and seem to be reading this sentence as, "The boy with my sister has red hair."

Another example of this kind of misinterpretation is their understanding of sentences like "The car was hit by the bus." When asked what was hit, the deaf student will often answer, "the bus." They apparently read the sentence as "The car was hit by the bus."

There are many other syntactic structures that deaf students find difficult. In Appendix A these structures are briefly explained and each structure is assigned to one of four levels of difficulty. The levels are based, whenever possible, on the findings of a six-year language study by Quigley, S. P.; Wilbur, R. B.; Power, D. J.; Montanelli, D. S.; and Steinkamp, M. W. (1976). The study's data show the orders of difficulty of the major syntactic structures of English for deaf students aged 10 to 18.

For convenience, in Appendix B these same structures are grouped according to Levels 1 to 4.

Vocabulary

It is difficult to give clear guidelines for the selection of appropriate vocabulary for deaf students. Vocabulary norms do exist, but are not very helpful for use with any particular group of students. The students almost certainly will have a very limited vocabulary, but this vocabulary will vary from student to student and from school to school. Vocabulary will have developed as a result of group experiences at school. School curriculum and activities play a very large role in the vocabulary development of deaf students. Curricula vary from school to school, however, and cannot provide a generalized word list.

Choice of vocabulary depends on the way in which material will be used. If it is meant for a social studies class studying the Civil War, then difficult words such as secession, emancipation, and abolitionist are completely appropriate. Normally the students would have a difficult time with these words, but it should be assumed that the teacher will have introduced them previously in class.

If one of the writer's objectives is vocabulary enrichment, then "new" words may be included deliberately. These should be listed at the beginning of the text, and the teacher should introduce and explain them. Illustrations can also help to explain new vocabulary.

An occasional word may be explained in a footnote. For example, scarlet might be defined as red, or trout as a fish. Words representing abstract concepts, however, should not be defined in a footnote. Loyalty, flexible, and develop are examples of words that must be taught in some other way; these concepts are too complex for a brief footnote.

It is a mistake to assume that students know the English equivalent of their sign vocabulary, that is, can read, write, or fingerspell the English words that represent the same concepts that are represented by their signs. Although some students may indeed know the English equivalents for all the signs they use, many will not. A teacher cannot select a word for inclusion in a text simply because he or she has seen the students sign it.

Idioms

Most deaf students are unfamiliar with idioms and can be totally confused by them. An idiom changes the lexical meaning of its component words and cannot be deciphered by a deaf student who may know the meaning of the individual words but is unaware of the idiomatic meaning. Most idioms should, therefore, be avoided, unless the teacher is explicitly teaching an idiom.

Some idioms are easy for the writer to recognize as idioms, others are not. Makkai (1975) outlines three different types of idioms, all of which are unknown to most deaf students. These idioms are described here in order to help writers to be alert for them.

Lexemic idioms are correlated with parts of speech. Some function as nouns. "Hot dog," for example, means "frankfurter in a bun." Some idioms function as adjectives or adverbs. "Pepper and salt hair" means "black hair mixed with gray;" "hammer and tongs" means "violently." Many idioms function as verbs. Examples are "turn in," "work out," "get up." These are sometimes called "two-word verbs" or "double verbs." Streng (1972) provides a helpful list of verbs and particles which, through combination, change their separate lexical meanings and become idioms. The particles listed by Streng are: "away," "down," "in," "off," "on," "out," "over," "up."

The verbs listed by Streng are:

beat	come	hand	pass	set	tie
blow	count	hang	pay	shake	turn
break	cut	head	pick	shut	use
bring	dig	help	point	stick	warm
burn	dry	hold	pull	strike	wipe
carry	fill	let	roll	take	write
catch	finish	line	rub	talk	
check	get	look	run	tear	
clean	give	make	saw	throw	

The same verb may be used with more than one particle, as "cut down," "cut off," "cut out," "cut up."

This particular type of idiom occurs frequently in English and can easily be overlooked by persons writing for deaf students. Material should be carefully checked to see that it does not contain idiomatic verbs which may be confusing.

Phraseological idioms are longer than lexemic idioms. They do not correlate with parts of speech. Examples of this type of idiom are "to fly off the handle" and "to be up the creek." These idioms are very easy to recognize and should be easy for the writer to avoid.

A third class of idioms consists of sentence idioms, usually adages or proverbs: "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." "Don't count your chickens before they're hatched." Anyone writing for the deaf should not use any of these idioms unless, of course, the proverb is to be taught during the lesson.

Idioms should be avoided in any material that is to be read for information only. They should be avoided in material that students will read independently. If the material is for group instruction, say a reading class, then idioms can (and should) be included. The teacher can introduce and explain the idioms before the story is read.

Rewriting vs. Writing

The writer will have to decide whether to rewrite material in order to simplify it or to write completely new material. There are advantages and disadvantages to each method.

A person writing original material has complete freedom to organize it and pace it in a manner that will make it easiest to read. Information in the material can come from more than one source. Sometimes it is easier to write original material than to do rewriting. A disadvantage is that the writer may have to spend considerable time researching and organizing the material.

One who decides to rewrite existing material has a choice of approaches. One way is to go through the material sentence by sentence, rewriting to eliminate difficult structures and vocabulary, and breaking long paragraphs into shorter units. The advantage of using this method is that all of the information of the original copy is retained. One disadvantage is that the rewritten material may become very lengthy. Using many short sentences will make the text longer, and a long text will intimidate an insecure reader. Another disadvantage is that sometimes it will be impossible to find simpler structures to convey the same meaning.

A second way to rewrite is to select only the highlights of the original material, eliminating less important parts. Then the highlights may be revised. Often this will be the best method. Whether to use this method will depend upon objectives and the amount of the original information that must be conveyed.

A third method is to summarize all of the information in notes, and rewrite from these notes. This is actually almost the same as writing original material, except that the content is already provided.

Appendix C contains a sample of the process of rewriting a paragraph containing a variety of difficult syntactic structures. The paragraph has been rewritten at successively lower levels.

A Suggested Procedure

When approaching the task of adapting reading materials for a specific kind of reader, this procedure may be found practical:

1. Check Appendix B to estimate the level of the particular audience's syntactic abilities.

2. Examine the instructional objectives to decide whether writing original material or rewriting would be more practical.

3. Write or rewrite at an appropriate level of syntax difficulty, using Appendix B as a guide.

4. Check material for vocabulary and idioms, and change as needed. Here, experience with deaf students and common sense will have to serve as guides.

APPENDIX A

Probable Levels of Difficulty of Syntactic Structures

The ordering of structures in this appendix is based, whenever possible, on the findings reported by Quigley, et. al. (1976). New data have been gathered since this writing and are being analyzed. When available, the reports of the analysis will be used to refine these guidelines.

It should be noted that the four "levels" do not in any way relate to reading grade equivalents. They reflect a sequence of development which holds true for most deaf students.

Level 1 is the easiest level; Level 4 the most difficult. All Level 1 structures are assumed to be included in Level 2, Level 2 structures included in Level 3, and so on. Level 4 includes all of the structures listed.

The validity of the levels has not been established beyond doubt, and the difference in difficulty between one level and the next can easily be questioned. However, the levels will serve as general guides for the writer.

Questions

Below, each type of question is given a name that is as non-technical as possible. However, two terms may need clarification: "do-support" and "modal." The term "do-support" means using a form of the verb do (do, does, did) along with the main verb. The term "modal" refers to may, might, can, could, will, would, shall, should, and must, which also are used with the main verb.

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 1. (a) Simple WH-questions without do-support or modals. (who, what, where, when, why) Also, "How many?" questions.

Who is Sylvia?
When is her party?
What is her problem?
Where is the mustard?
Why is Ray here?
How many eggs broke?

(b) Simple yes/no questions -- those having yes or no for an answer -- without do-support.

Is Rosalind here?
Are they your aunts?

Level 2. (a) "How" questions.

How are you doing?
How do you know?
How did you get there?
How do you find a square root?

(b) WH-questions with do-support or modals.

Who(m) did Sylvia hit?
When may I expect a reply?
What can I say?
Where do you keep the mustard?

(c) Yes/no questions with do-support or modals.

Do you like leopards?
May I pet one?
Will the parade pass by here?
Can we afford it?

(d) "How much" and "How long" questions.

How much is that dog?
How long is his hair?
How long did he sleep?

Level 3. Tag questions -- questions appended to a declarative statement.

She can count, can't she?
He can't go, can he?

Level 4. Embedded questions. The sentence is declarative, but there is an implied question included.

Bob wonders whether (or not) he can tell you.
Bob wonders if he can call you.
Bob wonders who wrote the letter.
Bob wonders what you meant.

Conjunction

Conjunction is the joining of two sentences, phrases, or verbs by "and," "but," and "or."

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 1. (a) Conjoined sentences. Any simple sentences joined by "and," "but," and "or." (Do not let the sentences get too long.)

Jack stood up, and Jill screamed.
Bob ran but Harry walked.

(b) Conjoined subjects.

Jack and Jill went up the hill.
Harry or Bob will help you.

(c) Conjoined objects.

They carried a pail and a frog.
Bring me a pen or a pencil.

Level 2. Conjoined verbs, with "and."

He fell down and broke his crown.

Level 3. Conjoined verbs, with "but," and "or."

Harry caught the ball but dropped it.
The car ran well or did not run at all.

Level 4. Gapping -- omitting the verb in the second conjoined sentence when the verb is the same as in the first sentence.

Jack broke his crown, and Jill her toe.

Negation

Negation includes sentences using no or not, or words which have a negative connotation but not a negative form.

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 1. (a) Using "not," without modals.

He is not here.

(b) Using "not" with do-support. This means using some form of the verb do (do, does, did).

He does not ski.

(c) Using "no."

We have no bananas.

(d) Contraction, without modals.

He isn't here.

Level 2. (a) Using "not" with simple modals (can, will, shall, must).

He will not win.
They must not go.

(b) Same as the preceding, plus contraction. (This probably makes it more difficult.)

We can't lose this game.

Level 3. (a) Using "not" with more complex modals (might, could, would, should).

They might not come.
That would not be fair.

(b) Same as the preceding, plus contraction. (The contraction probably makes it more difficult.)

That wouldn't be fair.
You shouldn't smoke so much.

Level 4. Words which do not have a negative form but which suggest an absence of something.

Little rain fell. (Suggests that not much rain fell.)
Few eagles sing. (Suggests that not many eagles sing.)

Note: Of course these words can occur without a negative connotation. For example, "a little hat," "a few dollars."

Pronouns

A pronoun refers to a noun and functions as a noun in a sentence. The noun to which the pronoun refers is called its "antecedent." For example, "John (antecedent) was happy. He (pronoun) had won the prize."

The use of three kinds of pronouns will be included here. They are subject, object, and possessive pronouns. Possessive adjectives will be treated as pronouns, too.

Reflexive pronouns will be treated separately in the next section, and relative pronouns will be treated in the section on relative clauses.

Here is a list of the pronouns treated:

Singular

	Subject Pronouns	Object Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns	Possessive Adjectives
1st Person	I	me	mine	my
2nd Person	you	you	yours	yours
3rd Person	he,she,it	him,her,it	his,hers,its	his,her,its

Plural

	Subject Pronouns	Object Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns	Possessive Adjectives
1st Person	we	us	ours	our
2nd Person	you	you	yours	your
3rd Person	they	them	theirs	their

The major problem students have with pronouns is finding antecedents. When writing on lower levels, it is a good idea to repeat an antecedent several times before using a pronoun. For example:

Cindy picked up her books.
Cindy was very unhappy.
She wanted to cry.

Another rule is to keep the pronoun fairly near its antecedent. She in the above sentence is quite near Cindy, for example. At the lower levels, never separate the pronoun and the antecedent by more than one sentence.

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 1. All of the pronouns listed above, with the antecedent appearing before the pronoun occurs.

John lost his book.
The grass was high. The farmer cut it down.

Level 4. Backwards pronominalization -- the antecedent follows the pronoun.

The man who helped him annoyed George.

Here, the antecedent (George) occurs later in the sentence than does its pronoun, "him."

Reflexives

Reflexive pronouns are myself, yourself, herself, himself, ourselves, themselves, itself.

Probable level of difficulty

Level 2. All reflexives may be included at this level.

I went to the store myself.
The children felt sorry for themselves.
Margaret gave herself a shampoo.

Passives

There are two "voices" in the English language, the active and the passive. Most sentences are in the active voice; that is, the subject is the doer of the action. An example of active voice is: The boy ate the cake. The passive voice reverses this order, putting the doer of the action after the verb: The cake was eaten by the boy.

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 2. Non-reversible sentences. These are sentences in which it is hardly possible to mistakenly reverse the doer and receiver of the action.

The story was written by Len.

The story could not have written Len. There is not much room for confusion.

Level 3. Reversible sentences. These are sentences in which it is possible to mistakenly reverse the doer and receiver of the action and still "make sense."

The truck was hit by the bus.

If the student imposes Subject-Verb-Object order and reverses doer and receiver, the sentence may be read: The truck hit the bus. Although erroneous, this event is possible and "makes sense."

Level 4. Agent-deleted passive. Here, the doer of the action is not mentioned.

The streets were painted green.

Nothing is said about who did the painting. This construction looks deceptively simple, but it is the most difficult of the passives for the deaf student to understand. In the above example, the implication is that the streets were painted by some unidentified person(s). Using an agent-deleted passive in a relative clause makes the sentence even more difficult to understand: The boy who was given a shot caught the measles.

Relative Clauses

A relative clause begins with one of the relative pronouns: who, whom, which, whose, or that. (Note, however, that some structures beginning with that are not relative clauses but are complements. These are treated in a later section.)

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 2. Relative clauses at the end of a sentence.

I met the couple whom you dislike.
They were the people who gave the party.
Peter is the man whose car was stolen.

Level 3. Relative clauses in the middle of a sentence.

The people who wanted to leave stood up.
The person whom he's discussing is Harry Truman.
The child whose dog was lost began to cry.

Level 4. Deletions.

(a) Sometimes the relative pronoun and forms of the verb be are deleted. This has happened in the following sentences:

The girl (who is) in the doorway is my sister.
The tiger (that was) in the cage had a jeweled collar.

This kind of construction, although it looks very simple, has been found to confuse a large percentage of deaf students.

(b) The pronoun may be omitted with verbs other than "be" verbs:

The person (whom) he's discussing is Harry Truman.

(c) Relative pronouns may follow prepositions, as in expressions such as to whom and from whom.

The girl to whom he gave a lift stole his wallet.
The man from whom he got the box was his uncle.

These constructions are made even more difficult when the whom is dropped and the preposition is moved. For example:

The girl he gave a lift to stole his wallet.
The man he got the box from was his uncle.

Complements

A technically precise definition of "complements" would be very complex. Let the following rough definition serve the purpose here. Complements are verbs or clauses that function as the object or subject of the main verb in a sentence. The underlined words in these examples are complements:

I like to run. (Object of "like")
Joe said that he will be late. (Object of "said")
He hates working. (Object of "hate")
To run is not easy. (Subject of "is")
Working never hurt anyone. (Subject of "hurt")
That he will be late is no surprise. (Subject of "is")

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 2. An infinitive (to plus a verb) as an object.

I like to drive.
He wants to eat now.

Level 3. (a) Noun clauses as objects of verb.

Alice thinks that we should go.
Bob said that we could stay.

Note: These clauses should not be confused with relative clauses beginning with "that." To determine whether a "that" clause is a relative or a complement, ask yourself which of these two questions might be answered by the clause: "What?" or "Which one?" A complement answers the question "what?" A relative answers the question "which one?" For example:

Alice thinks that we should go, answers "What does Alice think?" (Complement)
I found the book that I lost, answers "Which book did you find?" (Relative)

(b) Complements at the end of sentences that begin with "it."

It surprised no one that you played the ghost.

Level 4. (a) Gerunds (the "ing" form of a verb, functioning as a noun).

He loves diving.
His diving is fantastic.

(b) Infinitives used as subject.

To believe in goblins is foolish.

(c) Noun clauses as subjects.

That you played the ghost surprised no one.

(d) "That" deleted complements. "That" is omitted from a noun clause.

Alice thinks (that) we should go.

(e) Possessive complements.

I dislike Peter's spending their money.
He was amazed at the boy's driving the car.
The father's forgiving him was an unexpected development.

Adverbials

Adverbials describe manner, place, degree, cause, condition, time, duration, and frequency. Adverbials may be words, phrases, or clauses.

The order of difficulty suggested here is based on experience, not research data. The Quigley group study did not investigate adverbials.

Probable levels of difficulty

Level 1. (a) Adverbs and adverbial nouns of manner, place, degree, time, and frequency.

You must do it quickly. (manner)
She went home. Her car keys are there. (place)
Betty sunburns very quickly. (degree)
I'll think about that tomorrow. (time)
I see her often. (frequency)

(b) Prepositional phrases of place, time, and means.

The game is in Baltimore. (place)
It starts at noon. (time)
Ethelred is going by bus. (means)

Level 2. Adverbial clauses at the end of a sentence, except those beginning with "before" or "after."

Don't laugh when you see my car. (time)
We'll have to wait while I warm it up. (duration)
We can't go because it won't start. (cause)
Maybe it will start if you try it. (condition)

Level 3. (a) Adverbial clauses at the beginning of a sentence.

When Herman crossed the goal line, they cheered. (time)
While I go shopping you could take a nap. (duration)
Because she didn't like it, the whole thing was cancelled. (cause)
If you have the money, you can go. (condition)

(b) Time clauses using "before" and "after" at the beginning or end of sentences.

We went home after Steve began to argue.
After Steve began to argue, we went home.
We went home before the game was over.
Before the game was over, we went home.

APPENDIX B

Suggested Structures For Four Levels of Reading Difficulty*

Level 1

Questions
- Simple WH-questions, without do-support
- Simple yes/no questions
- "How many" questions

Conjunction:
- Conjoined sentences
- Conjoined subjects or objects

Negation:
- "Not" without modals
- "Not " with do-support
- Simple "no"
- Contractions without modals

Pronouns:
- Subject, object, and possessive pronouns; possessive adjectives. All with antecedent before pronoun.

Reflexives: None

Passives: None

Relatives: None

Complements: None

Adverbials:
- Adverbs and adverbial nouns of manner, place, degree, time, and frequency
- Prepositional phrases of place, time, means

Level 2 (All Level 1 structures, plus the following.)

Questions:
- "How" questions
- Yes/no questions, with do-support or modals
- WH-questions, with do-support or modals
- "How much" or "How long" questions

Conjunction:
- Conjoined verbs, with "and"

Negation:
- "Not," with simple modals
- Negative contractions with simple modals

* Each level includes all structures in lower levels.

Pronouns:
No additional pronouns

Reflexives:
All reflexives

Passives:
Non-reversible sentences

Relatives:
Relative clauses at end of sentence

Complements:
Infinitive as object

Adverbials:
Adverbial clauses at the end of a sentence, except those beginning with "before" or "after"

Level 3 (All Level 1 and Level 2 structures, plus the following.)

Questions:
Tag questions

Conjunction:
Conjoined verbs, with "but " and "or"

Negation:
"Not " with complex modals
Negative contractions with complex modals

Pronouns:
No additional pronouns

Reflexives:
No additional reflexives

Passives:
Reversible sentences

Relatives:
Relative clauses in the middle of a sentence

Complements:
Noun clauses as objects of verb
Noun clauses at end of sentences that begin with "it"

Adverbials:
Adverbial clauses at the beginning of sentence
Time clauses using "before" and "after" at beginning or end of sentence

Level 4 (All Level 1, 2, and 3 structures, plus the following.)

Questions:
Embedded questions

Conjunction:
Gapping

Negation:
Words not negative in form but suggesting absence of something

Pronouns:
Backwards pronominalization (antecedent follows pronoun)

Reflexives:
No additional reflexives

Passives:
Agent deleted

Relatives:
Relative pronoun and "be" verb both deleted
Relative pronoun deleted
Relative pronoun after a preposition

Complements:
Gerunds
Infinitives as subjects
Noun clauses as subjects
Noun clauses with "that" deleted
Possessives

Adverbials: No additional adverbials

APPENDIX C

An Example of Rewriting a Paragraph at Different Syntactic Levels

On the following pages, a paragraph that originally was syntactically at Level 4 has been rewritten at Levels 3, 2, and 1. In this example, only syntax has been revised, not vocabulary or idioms.

Furthermore, only those syntactic structures described in Appendix A and listed in Appendix B have been rewritten. The reader may feel that certain other structures in the paragraph could have been rewritten to the advantage of the student. That is probably true, but in keeping with this manual's focus on selected structures proven to be difficult, concern about other structures has been set aside.

Finally, it is not claimed that the revisions here are the best or only ways to rewrite the sentences. It would be a useful exercise for the reader to experiment with other replacements for the structures identified as "unacceptable" at the various levels.

Original Text (Level 4)	Structures Not Acceptable at Level 3	Revised Text (Level 3)
1. The electric light, which we are all used to, was actually invented only a few years ago.	1. "was invented" is an agent-deleted passive.	1. Edison actually invented the electric light, which we are all used to, only a few years ago.
2. That's surprising, isn't it?	2. None.	2. That's surprising, isn't it?
3. Maybe you wonder why people took so long to invent or even imagine it.	3. "why people ...." is an embedded question.	3. You may ask, "Why did it take people so long to invent or even imagine it?"
4. That you ask yourself such a question shows you have an inquiring mind and you should be congratulated.	4. "That you ask such a "question" is a noun clause used as a subject. "You have an inquiring mind" is a noun clause with "that" deleted.	4. If you asked yourself such a question, you must have an inquiring mind. Congratulations!
5. However, the same question can be asked about most of the inventions to which we have become accustomed.	5. "be asked" is an agent-deleted passive. "to which we ...." is a relative pronoun after a preposition.	5. However, we can ask the same question about most of the inventions which we have become accustomed to.
6. It was only within the past century that McCormick invented the reaper and Marconi wireless telegraph, inventions which now do not amaze us.	6. "It was ... that McCormick ..." This is an "it plus that clause" structure. "and Marconi the wireless telegraph" is an example of gapping, i.e., the verb is omitted.	6. Less than 100 years ago, McCormick invented the reaper and Marconi invented the wireless telegraph, inventions which now do not amaze us.
7. Few people realize that watching television is a pleasure their grandparents might not have experienced before they became adults.	7. "Few people" is not negative in form but suggests the absence of something. "Watching" is a gerund. "a pleasure their grandparents" is a relative pronoun (which) deleted before "their."	7. Almost nobody realized that our grandparents might not have been able to watch and enjoy television before they became adults.

Original Text (Level 3)	Structures Not Acceptable at Level 2	Revised Text (Level 2)
1. Edison actually invented the electric light, which we are all used to, only a few years ago.	1. The "which" clause is a relative in the middle of a sentence.	1. We all are used to the electric light, but Edison invented it only a few years ago.
2. That's surprising, isn't it?	2. "isn't it" is a tag question.	2. Does that surprise you?
3. You may ask, "Why did it take people so long to invent or even imagine it?"	3. "Invent or ... imagine" contains conjoined verbs.	3. You may ask, "Why did people need so much time before they thought about it?"
4. If you asked yourself such a question, you must have an inquiring mind. Congratulations!	4. "if..." is an adverbial clause at the beginning of a sentence.	4. You must have an inquiring mind, if you asked yourself such a question. Congratulations!
5. However, we can ask the same question about most of the inventions which we have become accustomed to.	5. None.	5. However, we can ask the same question about most of the inventions which we have become accustomed to.
6. Less than 100 years ago, McCormick invented the reaper and Marconi invented the wireless telegraph, inventions which now do not amaze us.	6. None.	6. Less than 100 years ago, McCormick invented the reaper and Marconi invented the wireless telegraph, inventions which now do not amaze us.
7. Almost nobody realizes that our grandparents might not have been able to watch and enjoy television before they became adults.	7. "Might not have been able to" is a use of <u>not</u> with a complex modal. "before they became adults" is a time clause using <u>before</u>. "that our grandparents ..." is a noun clause as object of a verb.	7. Most of our grandparents did not watch television when they were children. There was no television when they were young.

Original Text (Level 2)	Structures Not Acceptable at Level 1	Revised Text (Level 1)
1. We are all used to the electric light, but Edison invented it only a few years ago.	1. None.	1. We all are used to the electric light, but Edison invented it only a few years ago.
2. Does that surprise you?	2. This question is a yes/no question with do-support.	2. Are you surprised?
3. You may ask, "Why did people need so much time before they thought about it?"	3. The question is a WH-question with do-support. "before ... it" is an adverbial clause beginning with "before." Pronoun "it" is too far from antecedent.	3. You may think, "People needed thousands of years to invent the electric light. Why?"
4. You must have an inquiring mind, if you asked yourself such a question. Congratulations!	4. "if..." is an adverbial clause at the end of a sentence.	4. Did you ask that question? Then you must have an inquiring mind. Congratulations!
5. However, we can ask the same question about most of the inventions which we have become accustomed to.	5. "which ..." is a relative clause at the end of the sentence. The whole clause can be dropped because it adds little or nothing to the meaning.	5. However, we can ask the same question about most inventions.
6. Less than 100 years ago, McCormick invented the reaper and Marconi invented the wireless telegraph, inventions which now do not amaze us.	6. "which ...us" is a relative clause at the end of the sentence.	6. Less than 100 years ago, McCormick invented the reaper and Marconi invented the wireless telegraph. These inventions now do not amaze us.
7. Most of our grandparents did not watch television when they were children. There was no television when they were young.	7. "when they ..." is an adverbial clause at the end of a sentence.	7. Our grandparents were children once but they did not watch television. There was no television at that time.

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